

DRAFT

Task Force on Culturally and Linguistically Competent Physicians and Dentists
State Capitol, Room 4202
Sacramento, California
March 8, 2001
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 1:45 p.m. by Kathleen Hamilton, Director for the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) and Co-Chair of the Task Force. Director Hamilton introduced Diana Bontá, Director for the Department of Health Services (DHS) and Co-Chair of the Task Force. See the attached Notice for the Meeting Agenda.

Roll Call Director Hamilton requested Taryn Smith to call roll in order to determine if there was a quorum for the meeting. A quorum was established. A list of the Task Force members indicating attendance/non-attendance is attached.

Opening Comments by Diana Bontá, DHS Director Director Bontá welcomed the Task Force members and thanked everyone for participating on the Task Force. She stated that DHS has a \$28 billion dollar budget with over 6,000 employees and that the role of DHS is to improve the health status of all Californians. If health practitioners aren't able to provide services to patients in a multi-cultural society, then there is no headway to improve the health status of Californians. DHS also has a regulatory role in administering the Medi-Cal program, implementing federal legislation and ensuring that the providers of services are providing the best access to care.

Director Bontá then introduced the DHS staff who will be available to assist the Task Force members.

- Greg Franklin – Chief, Office of Multi Cultural Health
- Jack Dillenberg, DDS – Associate Director for Public Health Programs
- Jean Iacino - Special Assistant to the Director
- Gil Chavez, MD, MPH - Interim Chief, Maternal & Child Health Branch
- Alan Garza, MD – Chief, Office of Binational Border Health

**Opening
Comments by
Kathleen
Hamilton, DCA
Director**

Director Hamilton seconded the remarks made by Director Bontá. She also thanked members for helping to think through the implications of making sure the cultural and linguistic needs of California's health care patients are being met and that the way we provide health care services in California is respectful and responsive in acknowledging what those needs might be.

Director Hamilton stated that a genuine effort has been made by this administration for departments within state government to collaborate on common issues. She explained that, although DCA's role may not be immediately clear, DCA has an interest in this issue because the regulatory boards that manage and enforce licensing requirements for doctors and dentists are housed within the DCA. She pointed out that the executive officers for the medical board, Ron Joseph, and dental board, Georgetta Coleman, are both Task Force members.

Director Hamilton then introduced the DCA staff.

- Taryn Smith - Special Aide to the Director
- Kristy Wiese - Assistant Deputy Director, Legislative & Regulatory Review

**Opening
Comments by
Assembly
Member
Firebaugh**

Assembly Member Firebaugh thanked the members for participating in the Task Force and assisting the State in identifying ways to provide better health care to the people of California. Assembly Member Firebaugh also offered to assist the Task Force in working through problems as they present themselves, if necessary.

**Introduction of
Task Force
Members**

The members were requested to introduce themselves including the organization they were representing and their expectations of the Task Force. Director Bontá also requested that each member indicate a preference for which work group he or she would like to join, given their expertise.

A listing of Task Force members' self-introduction is attached.

**Bagley-Keene
Open Meeting
Act**

Anita Scuri, legal counsel for DCA, provided a overview of the Bagley-Keene Open Meeting Act, which was designed to allow the press and the people access to multimember state bodies when issues are being discussed and decisions are being made. Ms. Scuri advised that the Task Force is subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Act and encouraged members to be cognizant of its provisions.

The Open Meeting Act requires actions and deliberations by multimember state bodies to be taken in an open forum with ample notice provided to interested parties. The notice requirement is met by issuing a detailed agenda at least 10 days prior to the meeting. The Task Force may not discuss or take action on items that are not listed on the agenda.

Ms. Scuri explained that a “meeting” is a gathering of quorum of Task Force or subcommittee members or three or more members of a working group to discussing or transacting business in person, via telephone calls or even through e-mails.

**Subcommittee's
Progress**

AB 2394 requires that a subcommittee report on the feasibility of establishing a pilot program that would allow Mexican and Caribbean licensed physicians and dentists to practice in health centers in California's medically underserved communities be submitted to the Legislature by March 1, 2001. Director Bontá advised the Task Force that this was a very ambitious timeline and that Assembly Member Firebaugh and Senator Ortiz have been notified that that the report would be delayed. Copies of the notification were provided in the agenda packet.

**Subcommittee's
Progress – Visit
to Mexico**

Director Bontá discussed the importance of conducting a thorough review on the feasibility of a pilot project and methodology for having physicians and dentists from Mexico to practice in underserved areas throughout California. Director Bontá stated that she had just returned from Mexico where she

**Subcommittee's
Progress – Visit
to Mexico
(continued)**

attended the annual meeting of the National Institute of Public Health and the U.S. – Mexico Border Health Commission. Director Bontá met with the Secretary of Health, Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs, the General Director of the Program of Mexican Communities Abroad and Undersecretary of Institutional Relations for the Health Ministry. During the meetings discussions were held regarding issues of migrant health and the difficulty being experienced by Mexican citizens as they migrate to the United States. They also discussed pilot projects that would allow increased access for patients to be seen in a more seamless fashion. Director Bontá then called upon Arnold Torres to provide his observations of his meetings with Mexican health officials regarding the feasibility of the pilot project.

Mr. Torres reported that he met with associations of internal medicine, the directors of faculty of medicine and dentistry and the director of national health planning. During those meetings he discussed the concept of pursuing a pilot project to meet the needs of the Latino community in California. He said they would all like to participate in a pilot project with the same reciprocity as provided to Canada. In fact, the National Medical Schools in the U.S have certified approximately one-third of the Mexican medical schools. Unfortunately, the Mexican dental schools do not have the same U.S. certification program. He suggested that representatives from California should form a working group to conduct an equivalency review of the medical and dental education curriculums in Mexico.

Mr. Torres also reported that, with no disrespect to the Task Force, Assembly Member Firebaugh is proposing a bill to implement a pilot program for Mexican physicians and dentists to work in the communities.

**Subcommittee's
Progress -
Other
Information**

Director Bontá discussed the University of California, San Francisco's Welcome Home Project, which allows foreign-trained medical professionals to receive training and tools to assist them with returning to work in the health care field.

**Subcommittee's
Progress –
Other
Information
(continued)**

Ms. Cota mentioned that the Office of Minority Health (United States Public Health Service) has prepared a draft report on ensuring health through competence in health care and establishes standards for a number of areas and recommended that the subcommittee members review the report for background. Dr. Welsh commented that the standards that Ms. Cota was referring to in the report were also available in the federal register.

Dr. Cuevas indicated that he was interested in volunteering for the subcommittee.

Ms. Iwataki expressed a concern that the hearings include testimony from the Filipino community, which faces the same problems. Ms. Bontá responded that the focus is primarily on the pilot project, but testimony is welcomed because the legislation's intent is to meet the demands of clients throughout California.

Ms. Wong asked if the subcommittee's recommendations going to be reviewed by the Task Force members? Ms. Bontá responded that the full Task Force would review it prior to submittal to the Legislature.

Dr. Garcia was interested if the subcommittee would be addressing the issues of current cultural linguistic groups in California being admitted into dental and medical schools in California. Director Bontá responded yes that it would be part of the subcommittee's discussion.

Director Bontá then referred a question to Ms. Scuri regarding the process for scheduling and noticing the subcommittee meetings. Ms. Scuri responded the Open Meetings Act requires the subcommittee's meetings to be noticed 10 days in advance of the meeting with a detailed agenda. Ms. Bontá further questioned if the working groups needed to be noticed. Ms. Scuri clarified that if a working group consists of three more persons then the same requirements apply.

Public Hearings Mr. Torres advised the requirement for public hearings is one of the most important provisions of AB 2394. The hearings should be scheduled in areas where the patient population resides, so they may have the opportunity to testify. Mr. Torres offered the support of his association when scheduling the hearings. Mr. Torres also mentioned that the California Endowment Foundation may be able to provide some funding assistance. Mr. Torres concluded his statements by emphasizing the importance of having testimony from the population that receives (or doesn't receive) the health services.

Ms. Beller volunteered to assist in the scheduling the hearings and Dr. Welsh tentatively offered the San Francisco Department of Public Health hearing room for a hearing. Ms. Iwataki offered her services for any hearings that may be scheduled in Los Angeles or somewhere in Southern California and Ms. Cota volunteered to assist for any hearings scheduled in San Diego county. Dr. Flores followed up Mr. Torres' comments regarding the criticality of the hearings, by stating that it's important that testimony is recorded and that the Task Force members could be instrumental because of their familiarity of the regions.

Identification of Future Planning Needs Task Force members discussed numerous existing resources on the subject of medically underserved communities and on cultural and linguistic standards. Director Hamilton indicated that staff would work with members to collect the materials and make them available to the full Task Force.

Dr. Gaw requested a list of the Task Force members and what mechanism would be used for communication amongst the Task Force members. Anita Scuri, Legal Counsel reminded the Task Force members that if there is a discussion between three or more members of the Task Force, then a meeting is occurring and a 10 day notice must be issued. In clarifying the legal advice, Ms. Scuri indicated that e-mail communication is not excluded from the Bagley-Keene Open Meetings Act. To resolve the issue, Director

Identification of Future Planning Needs (continued) Hamilton suggested that if members of the Task Force have information that they would like to share or discuss with other members, to notify staff so the item could be appropriately noticed.

Dr. Gaw suggested that incentives for dentists and physicians to work in underserved areas be considered as another approach for addressing the issues.

Comments from the Public In response to Director Hamilton's request for comments from the audience, Kathy Sherman from the California Nurses Association expressed the association's support as a resource to the Task Force. The association has the same concerns regarding the issues that will be reviewed by the Task Force.

Future Task Force Meetings Director Hamilton recommended that the Task Force consider meeting on a quarterly basis. The members concurred with the recommendation.

Director Hamilton also indicated that staff would be drafting a proposed working group list and that Task Force members start considering:

⇒ Tentative public hearing dates and venues.

⇒ Experts and witnesses to be invited to the hearings to provide testimony.

Mr. Torres suggested that at least one public hearing and quarterly Task Force meetings be held at the University of California, San Francisco.

Adjournment The Task Force meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Self Introduction of Task Force Members

Ernest (Ray) Garcia, DDS

Graduated from UCLA and attended UCSF School of Dentistry. Is a general dentist practicing in Marysville for the last five years and approximately 70% of his clients are Spanish speaking. As a member of the California Dental and Hispanic Dental Associations, the continuing education working group would be relative to his knowledge and expertise.

Rodolfo Diaz

Is the Executive Director for the Human Health Division, Community Health Foundation. The Foundation serves over 300,000 out patients. No working group was selected.

Anil Chawla

Is the Medical Director and attending physician for Clinicas del Camino Real, which provides medical, dental, and psychological services to over 100,000 primarily Hispanic

Doreena Wong, Esq.

Is a staff attorney for the National Health Law Program, which is a support center for legal service organizations that represent members who are seeking health care. Ms. Wong is interested in participating in the work group that develops cultural competency standards.

Mia Iwataki

Is the Director for Office for Diversity Program for North County Health Services, which is the second largest Department of Health in the U.S. Ms. Iwataki also serves on three other bodies whose primary focus is cultural and linguistic access. Ms. Iwataki is interested in the cultural competency standards work group.

Hector Flores, M.D.

Is the Co-Director of the Family Practice Residence Program for Memorial Medical Center, in Los Angeles. Health services are provided to approximately 40,000 patients in the East Los Angeles area, 90% who are Latino and the remaining 10% are Asian, Caucasian, or African-American. Dr. Flores is interested in the cultural competency standards work group.

Ron Joseph

Is the Executive Director for the Medical Board of California. There are two issues, which the medical board has a great interest in because its charge is to protect consumers and patients and to inevitably enhance services.

Albert Gaw, M.D.

Is the Medical Director for long-term care for mental health and Mental Health Rehabilitation, in San Francisco. Dr. Gaw has practiced as a clinician and psychiatrist as well as teaching and now administration. Dr. Gaw is interested in the Voluntary Cultural Competency work group.

Melissa Welch, M.D., MPH	Is the Chief Medical Officer for the San Francisco Department of Public Health and a faculty member at UCSF. Dr. Welch is also the founder and principal of <i>Diversity Training and Consultation for Health Care Providers</i> . Dr. Welch is interested in the Voluntary Cultural Competency work group.
Suzanna Gee, Esq.	Is the Associate Managing Attorney for Protection and Advocacy, Inc. in Sacramento. The organization is a federally mandated program to assist and represent persons with disabilities. Ms. Gee's focus is mental health law issues involving adults and youths that are either inpatient or outpatient and trying to secure health services.
Jack Broussard Jr. DDS	Is currently President of the California Dental Association, a general practitioner in Pasadena and part-time faculty member at the UCLA School of Dentistry.
Eva Vasquez-Camacho	Represents the United Farmworkers of America who have nearly 40 years of experience advocating for Latinos in farmwork. Ms. Camacho's participation on the Task Force will ensure representation on the issues that farmworkers experience in seeking health care.
Georgetta Coleman	Is the Executive Officer for the Dental Board of California and looks forward to great things that the Task Force will be accomplishing.
Barbara Beller	Is a resource specialist for the California Rural Indian Health Board. There has been a continuous shortage of health professionals to serve the Native Americans in California, due to the remote areas and low pay. Ms. Beller is interested in the Cultural Competency Standards work group.
David Carlisle, M.D., Ph.D.	Is the Director for the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHDP) and was previously a member of the faculty for the Department of Medicine, UCLA School of Medicine. The cultural and linguistic competency issue is important focus for OSHDP because it relates to many of the agency's programs (e.g. Health Professions Education Foundation, Health Professions Careers Opportunity Program, Student Loan and Repayment Program). This issue of cultural and linguistic competency is a primary driver in outcomes and utilization of health care services.
Angela Mora	Is a Patient Advocate with the Office of Patient Advocate for the Department of Managed Health Care. A major task for the office is to educate consumers enrolled in Health Maintenance Organizations about their rights and responsibilities. Interested in the Continuing Education work group.

Anmol Mahal, M.D.	Is in private practice in Fremont and on the Board of Trustees for the California Medical Association (CMA). As a member of CMA, he is very involved in the ethnic medical organization section and is very excited about the legislation and the Task Force's role. Currently has a daughter that started medical school six months ago and she is fluent in English, her mother language and Spanish.
Earl Lui, Esq.	Is a senior attorney with the Consumers Union. The organization is very active on the policy and advocacy level in California on a number of different issues including health care and public programs like Medi-Cal. It's good to see that there are representatives from the medical associations, but there are concerns regarding the lack of commitment from health providers. Additionally, how far will the Task Force go with the issues if there is not sufficient funding and resources to address the outcomes.
Felipe Santana, Ph.D.	Is a research and clinical psychologist and currently a program administrator for Proposition 10 in Ventura County. Interested in the Cultural Competency work group.
Daniel Jordan, Ph.D	Is a social psychologist, but is a planner and grant writer. Interested in working on any of the work groups.
Tomiko Conner	Is the Director for the Community Voices Project, which is a demonstration project, focused on increasing access to healthcare for immigrants in Alameda County. Previously was the Executive Director for the California Pan-Ethnic Health Network, which is the leading community based advocate on the cultural competency issues for the medical, and health families program.
Maximiliano Cuevas, M.D.	Is the Executive Director for Clinicas de Salud, Del Valle de Salinas, which is a network of community health centers in Monterey County. The network provides health care services primarily to farm workers and their families. As President of the California Hispanic Healthcare Association provides approximately 1.1 million health care visits for patients in rural communities.
Arnoldo Torres	Is the Executive Director for California Hispanic Health Care Association and worked closely with the author of the legislation. All the comments from the Task Force are appreciated.
Arthur Chen, M.D.	Is the Health Officer for Alameda County. As a practicing family physician working with Asian-Americans who are primarily low-income and monolingual is familiar with the frustrations that patients have with the cultural and linguistic issues surrounding health care services.

Roll Call of Task Force Members

Attendees:

Diana Bontá	Barbara Beller
Jack Broussard	David Carlisle
Anil Chawla	Arthur Chen
Georgetta Coleman	Tomiko Conner
Irma Cota	Maximiliano Cuevas
Rodolfo Diaz	Hector Flores
Ernest Garcia	Albert Gaw
Suzanna Gee	Kathleen Hamilton
Miya Iwataki	Daniel Jordan
Ron Joseph	Earl Lui
Anmol Mahal	Angela Mora
Felipe Santana	Arnold Torres
Eva Vasquez-Camacho	Melissa Welch
Doreena Wong	

Non Attendees:

Rini Chakaborty	Mary Chung
Carlota del Portillo	Newton Gordon
David Hayes-Bautista	Mary Anne Koda Kimble
Maria Lemus	Aliza Lifshitz
Francis Lu	Lia Margolis
